

Poetry.

IS IT TRUE?

HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

Is it true, O Christ in heaven,
That the highest suffer most?
That the strongest wander farthest,
And more helplessly are lost?
That the mark of rank in nature
Is capacity for pain?
And the anguish of the singer
Makes the sweetness of the strain?

Is it true, O Christ in heaven,
That, whichever way we go,
Walls of darkness must surround us,
Things we would but cannot know?
That the infinite must bound us
Like a temple veil unrent,
While the finite ever wearies,
So that none's therein content?

Is it true, O Christ in heaven,
That the fullness yet to come
Is so glorious and so perfect
That to know would strike us dumb?
That, if ever for a moment
We could pierce beyond the sky
With these poor dim eyes of mortals,
We should just see God and die?

Contributions.

AN EASTER SERMON.

J. ALLEN MILLER.

"He is not here for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay." Matt. 28: 6.

With the dawning light of the first Easter morning came the rustle of angel-wings! For you know the funeral grief of the world was heard from the hill of death when the Son of God died for the sins and sorrows of the sons and daughters of men. You know how heaven and earth robed themselves in mourning at midday when Christ yielded his life. And you must know how hour of deeper darkness and grief succeeded hour of gloom after the tragic scenes of the crucifixion were enacted. But morning came again. And from heaven came the angel of the Lord to the tomb of the Son of God. Came with the mandate of Omnipotence to roll away the stone! Came with a message from the throne to announce the "risen Lord."

It was early in the morning of the first day of the week that Mary Magdalene and others of the faithful women came to the sepulchre. THEY could not forget their Lord, so they, having prepared spices to anoint his body, came seeking Jesus. What loving service did these sisters lend—faithful to him in life; grief-stricken in his death; and even now they cannot forget him. They must minister yet more to him, if it be only the anointing of his body with the rich spices. And as they came nearer they wondered among them-

selves who should roll away the stone for them. Little did they think that he who was to do this service for them had already accomplished the work. But see! the great stone is rolled away. Not to let Jesus out. Oh, no! He had power to lay down his life and he had power to take it up again. But to show these earnest seekers of Jesus the empty tomb. For he who was sent to do this work said to the women, "Fear not ye; for I know ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen." Now let us contemplate for a moment the risen Lord. As I think I am made to exclaim, What wonderful power, and what a glorious victory for Jesus! Risen? Let heaven tell forth his triumphs. Risen? Let the earth proclaim the news! Risen? Let soul tell soul these tidings until none can say of the children of men, I never heard it before.

But the Lord risen makes us think of his life. Bidding adieu to heaven and all his glories he came the babe of Bethlehem. As he lay cradled in a manger, an angel announced his coming to shepherds and a star guided the wise men to seek him. The choirs of a midnight sky pealed forth his wonderful praises. We see him but now and then in the humbler walks of life until we hear him announced by the "voice of the one crying out of the wilderness" in such strangely thrilling accents: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

He now enters upon his special mission. He preaches the "good news" of the kingdom of God. He gives an outline of all his work in his answer to the inquiry of John. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." What a blessed work was this. What a friend was he!

And yet He, this anointed one,—what a man of sorrows was he. Though heir of all things yet was he homeless. Why He said, "The fowls of the air have their nests and the beasts of the field their lairs, but the Son of man hath not as much as a place to lay his head."

The stern preacher of righteousness and yet of what tender compassion. See him weeping for his friend Lazarus! Listen to the word of cheer he speaks to the women of Canaan! And now the scenes of the last few days of his life crowd themselves upon me. Persecuted, hunted to death. The weight of the world's sins upon him, he cries out "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." In his

agony he prayed "O my father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; never the less not as I will but as thou wilt." Little knew he of the garden's riches when earth's sorrows were all upon him, when the dying souls of the world were all looking up to him. And no wonder that the great sweat drops of blood fell to the ground. But now the prayer is done. And lo! the betrayer is at hand. At the head of a howling mob thirsting for his blood comes one of the twelve. With clashing swords, and flashings of burning torches and lanterns they came upon him. They laid hold on Jesus and led him away. Then began a night of horror too awful to describe. Think of the innocent Jesus in the hands of his blood-thirsty enemies. See that ruffian strike him with rods! What shouts of approval he received from his associates! "Let the blasphemer die for he says he is the Son of God." Then they spit in his face. They buffet him. They smite him with the palms of their hands. Blind-folded they smite him saying, "Prophecy—tell us who struck thee?" Think you he received kindly treatment? Ah, such kindly treatment as a dove might receive from a hawk. As a lamb might receive in the midst of a pack of starving wolves.

But the end is not yet. They drag him before Pilate and bitterly denounce him. Pilate sends him to Herod. His treatment here is told in a few words "And Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe and sent him again to Pilate." Here in the presence of the multitude he stands once again. And Pilate coming into the presence of the people asks—"Shall I release him?" and they cried, "crucify him! crucify him." "Shall I release him?" "No, no. Give us Barabbas! Give us the robber! Release the murderer! But Jesus—to the cross with him!" "But he has alone nothing worthy of death; what shall I do with him?" And they cried out the more exceedingly—"crucify him!" And the third time Pilate says to them, "Why, what evil hath he done?" But they demanded his death and the voice of the multitude prevailed against him. So having scourged him he was given over to be crucified. The soldiers led him away into the hall. Here they clothed him with a purple robe in mockery of a kingly attire. They crowned him with thorns in derision and thrust a reed in his hand as scepter with scorn and bowing the knee with fiendish cheer they hailed him King of the Jews!

And now he is led away to die. Ah, it is little wonder he can not bear the instrument of his death after such a night! But